

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 03559 201249Z

43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 IO-10 /082 W
----- 104012

P R 201045Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3955

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

CDR USAAG NKP

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 3559

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, LA

SUBJECT: CALL ON PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA

REF: A) VIENTIANE 3464 (NOTAL)

B) VIENTIANE 3516

1. IN CALL ON PRIME MINISTER AFTERNOON MAY 20, SOUVANNA
INTERRRUPTED MY INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY SAYING THAT "EVERY-
THING WOULD BE ALLRIGHT." THE MINISTERS HAD NOT GONE TO
SAVANNAKHET BECAUSE BOUN OUM BEING IN KENG KOK NEARBY
AND SAVANNAKHET BEING ON THE BANKS OF THE MEKONG, THEY
WERE AFRAID FOR THEIR SECURITY, PARTICULARLY OF SOME
ATTEMPT (UNDEFINED) AGAINST THEM FROM THE THAI SIDE. AS
A RESULT, HE HAD ORDERED "OUR TROOPS" (MEANING PL) TO
ENTER THE CITY AND ENSURE ITS SECURITY. HE HAD DONE THE
AME THING IN PAKSE WHERE THERE WERE FAR TROOPS OF
DOUBTFUL LOYALTY. THE MINISTERS WOULD NOW GO TO
SAVANNAKHET TOMORROW. I REPEATED OUR CONCERN FOR THE
AMERICANS WHO WERE IN EFFECT PRISONERS AND OUR HOPE
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PAGE 02 VIENTI 03559 201249Z

THAT WE COULD FLY THEM OUT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

2. I THEN TOLD SOUVANNA THAT U.S. POLICY CONTINUED TO SUPPORT HIM AND POLICY OF NEUTRALITY AND INDEPENDENCE AND THAT WE HAD MADE VERY EFFORT TO KEEP THE SITUATION CALM. I REPORTED TO HIM THE CONVEERSATION MR. RAMSEY AND I HAD WITH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PHOUMI VONGVICHIT YESTERDAY. I SAID WE HAD MADE THIS CALL IN ORDER TO ASCERTAIN THE POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT ON THE WHOLE SUBJECT OF AID. I WENT OVER THE POINTS THAT PHOUMI HAD MADE AND ASKED THE PRIME MINISTER WHETHER THIS INDEED REPRESENTED THE VIEWS OF THE PGNU. HE CONFIRMED THAT THEY DID. HE SAID THAT THE AMERICAN PRESENCE WAS TOO WIDESPREAD THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND THAT AID SHOULD BE DISPENSED FROM WITHIN THE EMBASSY. I SAID THAT I HAD REPORTED THE CONVERSATION TO WASHINGTON WITH THE RECOMMENDATION THAT A WORKING GROUP BE FORMED IN ORDER TO STUDY THESE PROBLEMS CONCRETELY. WHAT WE WANTED, I SAID, WAS TO BE ABLE TO TALK ABOUT PROBLEMS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS DEVELOPING BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS AT A TIME WHEN THERE WAS A GOOD DEAL OF TENSION IN THE AIR.

3. FINALLY, I GAVE HIM THE LETTER ON THE DECISION TO CLOSE OUT OUR PROVINCIAL OFFICES AND WENT OVER ORALLY THE MAIN POINTS INVOLVED. I STRESSED OUR HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD APPOINT A REPRESENTATIVE WITH WHOM WE COULD SETTLE THIS MATTER EXPEDITIOUSLY. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD. THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEMS. HE WOULD DISCUSS THIS WITH THE CABINET (WHICH MEETS TOMORROW).

4. COMMENT: NOTHING COULD MAKE CLEARER SOUVANNA'S ENDORSEMENT OF PL POSITIONS THAN HIS SLIP OF THE TONGUE WHEN REFERRING TO PL TROOPS AS "OUR TROOPS." THE ENTRY OF THESE TROOPS INTO THE MAJOR CITIES OF THE COUNTRY IS IN THE LOGIC OF THE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE PAST WEEKS, AND SHOULD STABILIZE THE SITUATION AS SOCIALIST ORDER IS IMPOSED RAPIDLY ON THE COUNTRY. IT SHOULD AT LEAST INSURE SECURITY AND RELEASE OF OUR COLLEAGUES IN SAVANNAKHET.

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PAGE 03 VIENTI 03559 201249Z

ON RETURNING TO EMBASSY I CALLED MININT PHENG PHONGSAVAN AND DISCOVERED HE WAS WITH PRIME MINISTER. WE HAVE NO FURTHER NEWS FROM SAVANNAKHET SINCE THIS MORNING, POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF FUEL SHORTAGE TO RUN GENERATOR, AND CAN ONLY HOPE SITUATION HAS CALMED DOWN. CHAPMAN

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